

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20510

February 7, 2023

The Honorable Camille Touton
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear Commissioner Touton:

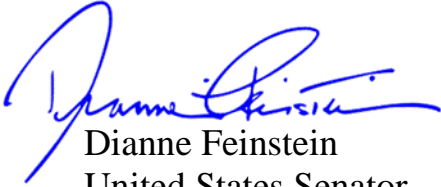
We write to urge the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to make the greatest possible use of the \$250 million that Congress appropriated for desalination projects in the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA) by waiving BOR's \$30 million per-project cap and allowing projects to receive federal funding up to the full statutory federal cost share of 25 percent of the total project cost. Addressing the devastating effects of climate change, including chronic drought as we have in California, requires innovative technologies and solutions; lifting the \$30 million per-project cap would incentivize regional desalination projects.

Regional cooperation ocean water desalination projects like the Doheny Desalination Project in Dana Point, California are of particular importance to our coastal communities' ability to reduce drought. This project, which has already received significant federal funding through the BOR's desalination grant program, will provide a drought-proof and environmentally sustainable source of water for south Orange County, California, which is heavily reliant on imported water. Further, the Doheny Desalination Project is carbon neutral and has other significant environmental advantages such as incorporating subsurface slant well intake technology and salt brine blending. In addition, regionalizing the project will achieve efficiencies of scale, reducing the cost per acre-foot of water generated by 15 percent.

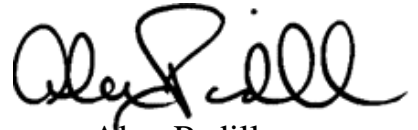
As you know, Congress and the Biden Administration have made historic federal investments in critical infrastructure projects and desalination projects during the past two years. However, federal funding for projects like the broadly supported Doheny Desalination Project have been administratively capped at \$30 million. This project funding cap disincentivizes regional cooperation projects that cost more than \$120 million by providing a lower federal cost share than the statutory 25 percent rate. We urge you to waive the \$30 million per-project cap, which would affirmatively *incentivize* regional projects, delivering more affordable water at a lower unit cost and providing regional solutions to drought challenges.

We appreciate everything you are doing to help with California and the West's drought, and thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Mike Levin
Member of Congress